The Member, in conclusion, requested that the matter might engage the careful attention of the Government.

Dewan's reply.—The Member's representation will be referred to the Chief Engineer and, on receipt of his report, necessary action will be taken with due regard to the urgency of this road.

VI. PUBLIC HEALTH.

(3) Medical Relief.

68. Mundakayam Hospital and opiates for the use of Estates.

Mr. E. Vincent (Member, the Mundakayam Planters' Association) said that the need for a hospital in Mundakayam was a very urgent one. In the Mundakayam district, there was a floating population of about 15,000 apart from the town of Mundakayam and its outlying villages of Kutikal, Peruvanthanom, etc. The nearest hospital was at Kanjirapalli, 12 miles distant. In Mundakayam itself, there was a District Dispensary with a Sub-Assistant Surgeon in charge. The Estate coolies and the local inhabitants could obtain medical relief there, but it was obvious that, without accommodation, the Medical Officers in charge could only treat simple cases, in fact only out-patients. The planting community took the matter of medical relief in hand some years back with the result that there were at present ten fully equipped hospitals in charge of properly qualified Apothecaries for the care and treatment of Estate labour. The local inhabitants, finding it impossible to get into the Government hospital at Kanjirapalli, applied for relief to Estate hospitals and got admission there invariably. Yearly, thousands of coolies were passing through Mundakayam on their way to, and from, planting districts and they received free treatment from Estate hospitals, if they fell ill on the way. In the Mundakayam district alone, the planters would be spending about thirty to forty thousand rupees in 1917 for medical relief. The fact that so many of His Highness' subjects were being treated in the Estate hospitals should surely merit some help from the Government, since the Government were relieved of such a big burden. A few years ago, there was a scheme suggested to build a new Travellers' Bungalow at Mundakayam and convert the present Travellers' Bungalow into a hospital. Perhaps, the scheme fell through on account of financial stringency. But the Member said that a grant-in-aid for the Estate hospitals, or, at least the conversion of the dispensary into a hospital, was a desirable measure and that the Darbar Physician favoured some such relief being granted to the planters.

As regards opiates, the Member said that the issue at stake was the importation of opium and its compounds into the country for medicinal purposes. The importer had first to obtain a British export permit from the Resident and he had then to make an application to the Excise Department for an import permit. The British permit would ordinarily be for a period of one month and his experience was that, before the import permit was obtained from the Excise Department, the period prescribed in the export permit oftentimes expired. To avoid such inconvenience, the Member suggested that arrangements might be made for permits being issued by local Magistrates or that a stock of opiates might be kept in the Government dispensaries and stores. The importation was entirely for medicinal purposes. There could be no objection to guarantees being given to that effect. The Member hoped that the state of affairs complained of by him would soon be remedied by the Government.

Dewan's reply.—The Excise Commissioner will be asked to expedite the issue of import permits. The suggestion to authorise Magistrates to issue such permits does not appear to be feasible. The Member's suggestions about medical relief for Mundakayam will be referred to the Darbar Physician.

(2) Other Industries—(*continued*).

69. Suggestions for the development of Industries in Travancore.

Mr. K. Govinda Pillai (Member, Mavelikara taluk) began by saying that the system of imparting education in schools was not conducive to the betterment of

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